

Appl. No. 09/944,217
Amendment dated September 17, 2003
Reply to Office Action of June 19, 2003

Amendment to the Claims:

The listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1. (currently amended): A method of dividing an elongated web having a variable width into a plurality of elongated strips, comprising the steps of:

advancing the web lengthwise in a predetermined direction along a predetermined path;

subdividing the web into a plurality of strips, including cutting the advancing web in at least one severing plane;

monitoring the widths of each of the strips and generating signals denoting the monitored signals widths;

b2 processing said signals; and

shifting at least one of the web and the severing plane sideways when the processing step indicates departure of at least one monitored width from at least one other monitored width.

Claim 2. (original): The method of claim 1, wherein said subdividing step includes splitting the web into two strips.

Claim 3. (original): The method of claim 2, wherein said processing step includes comparing the signals denoting the widths of said two strips.

Claim 4. (canceled)

Claim 5. (withdrawn): The method of claim 4, wherein said shifting step includes moving the web sideways in a direction to reduce the width of the strip having a width exceeding half the width of the web.

Claim 6. (withdrawn): The method of claim 3, wherein said shifting step includes turning the advancing web about an axis which is located in said at least one severing plane.

Claim 7. (original): The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of advancing the strips along second paths.

Claim 8. (original): The method of claim 7, wherein said step of advancing the strips includes establishing a variable spacing between said second paths.

Claim 9. (original): The method of claim 8, wherein said monitoring step is carried out in said second paths.

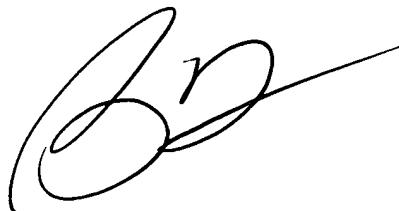
Claim 10. (original): The method of claim 8, wherein the establishment of said variable spacing includes changing the mutual inclinations of two neighboring successive increments of each of said second paths.

Claim 11. (original): The method of claim 10, wherein said second paths slope downwardly from said at least one severing plane as seen transversely of said predetermined direction.

Claim 12. (previously presented): The method of claim 8, wherein said step of establishing a variable spacing includes shifting at least one of the strips sideways.

Claim 13. (canceled)

Claim 14. (original): The method of claim 12, wherein said step of shifting at least one of the strips includes shifting only one of said strips sideways relative to the other of said strips.

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Claim 15. (currently amended): Apparatus for dividing an elongated web having a variable width into two strips, comprising:

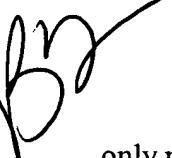
means for advancing the web lengthwise in a predetermined direction along a predetermined path;

means for subdividing the web into two strips including a severing unit arranged to split the web in a severing plane;

means for monitoring the widths of each of the strips and for generating first signals denoting the monitoring monitored widths;

means for processing said first signals and for generating second signals when the widths of the strips deviate from each other; and

adjusting means including means for shifting at least one of the web and the subdividing means transversely of said direction in response to said second signals.


Claim 16. (withdrawn): The apparatus of claim 15, wherein said adjusting means includes only means for shifting the web of transversely of said direction.

Claim 17. (withdrawn): the apparatus of claim 15, wherein said shifting means includes first and second rollers flanking the web upstream of said severing unit and rotatable about at least substantially parallel axes, and means for jointly turning said rollers about an axis at least substantially normal to said at least substantially parallel axes.

Claim 18. (currently amended): The apparatus of claim 15, wherein said advancing means includes a first pair of rolls each engaging a different one of the strips, said first rolls being rotatable about axes which are inclined relative to each other.

Claim 19. (currently amended): The apparatus of claim 18, wherein said first rolls are adjacent one side of said path and said advancing means further includes a second pair of rolls each

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engaging a different one of the strips, the rolls of said second pair being adjacent the other side of said path and having axes which are inclined relative to each other.

Claim 20. (currently amended): The apparatus of claim 19, wherein said monitoring means is disposed downstream of at least one of said first and second pairs of rolls as seen in said predetermined direction.

Claim 21. (currently amended): The apparatus of claim 19, further comprising means for changing the level of at least one of said first and second pairs of rolls.

Claim 22. (currently amended): the apparatus of claim 21, wherein at least one of said first and second pair of rolls is disposed beneath the respective portion of said predetermined path.

Claim 23. (withdrawn): The apparatus of claim 22, further comprising a deflecting roller contacting the strips downstream of said at least one pair of rolls, said level changing means including an elevator common to said at least one pair of rolls and said deflecting roller.

Claim 24. (withdrawn): The apparatus of claim 23, wherein said at least one pair of rolls and said deflecting roller are disposed at opposite sides of said path.

Claim 25. (withdrawn): The apparatus of claim 23, further comprising a housing having a guide for said elevator.

Claim 26. (withdrawn): The apparatus of claim 25, wherein said elevator comprises a platform supporting said deflecting roller and said at least one pair of rolls and being movable along said guide.

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Claim 27. (withdrawn): The apparatus of claim 26, wherein said level changing means further comprises a feed screw operable to move said platform along said guide and fastener means releasably securing said platform to said housing.

Claim 28. (withdrawn): The apparatus of claim 25, wherein said guide is a dovetailed guide.

Claim 29. (currently amended): The apparatus of claim 18, wherein said first rolls are disposed at a level below the respective adjacent portion of said predetermined path, the apparatus further comprising means for changing the level of at least one of said first rolls.

Claim 30. (previously presented): The apparatus of claim 29, wherein said processing means includes means for generating second signals denoting the combined width of the strips and said means for changing the level of the at least one roll is responsive to said second signals.

Claim 31. (previously presented): The apparatus of claim 30, wherein said processing means further comprises means for generating additional signals denoting the widths of the strips and the strip shifting means further includes means for changing the level of the other of the rolls in response to said additional signals.

B2 concluded